AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of identifying a compound that stimulates modulates hepatocyte growth or plasma cell differentiation or Th2 T-cell subset activity comprising:

a)   contacting hepatocytes or B cells or T cells from an XBP-1 deficient mouse, deficient in XBP-1 with a test compound; and

b)   determining the effect of the test compound on the growth of the hepatocytes or differentiation of the B cells into plasma cells or Th2 cytokine production by the T cells, the test compound being identified as a modulator of hepatocyte growth or plasma cell differentiation or Th2 T-cell subset activity based on the ability of the test compound to stimulate modulate the growth of the hepatocytes or differentiation of the B cells or Th2 cytokine production by the T cells from the XBP-1 deficient mouse deficient in XBP-1.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the cells deficient in XBP-1 are in a non-human XBP-1 deficient animal and the cells are contacted with the test compound by administering the test compound to the non-human XBP-1 deficient mouse animal.

3.   (Canceled)

4.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the cells deficient in XBP-1 are isolated from a non-human the XBP-1 deficient mouse animal, or embryo thereof, and the cells are contacted with the test compound by culturing the test compound with the isolated cells deficient in XBP-1.

5.-13. (Canceled)

14.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein hepatocyte growth is determined by determining the transcription of immediate early genes.

3

15.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein hepatocyte growth is determined by monitoring the incorporation of BrdU.

16.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein hepatocyte growth is determined by TUNEL staining.

17.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein B cell activity is determined by determining plasma cell differentiation.

18.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein B cell activity is determined by determining immunoglobulin secretion.

19.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein B cell activity is determined by determining Syndecan-1 transcription.

20.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein Th2 cell subset activity is determined by determining T cell cytokine production.

21.   (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the T cell cytokine is selected from the group consisting of: IL-4, IL1-5, IL-6, and IL-10.

22.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the XBP-1 deficient mouse is an XBP-1 knock-out mouse.

23.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the XBP-1 deficient mouse is an XBP-1 conditional knock-out mouse.